

H. Res. 158

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

May 1, 2007.

Whereas in 1780, William Wilberforce was elected at the age of 21 years to the British House of Commons;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce and his friends were active in at least 69 different projects focusing on issues such as prison reform, education, child labor conditions, animal cruelty, and the reformation of the culture;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce was mentored and counseled by former slave trader and author of the hymn “Amazing Grace”, John Newton, on the horrors of the slave trade;

Whereas at the time, 11 million human beings had been captured and taken from Africa to the Western hemisphere and forced into slavery and bondage;

Whereas at the time, the British Empire controlled the largest portion of the slave trade;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce devoted his life to the suppression and abolition of the institution of slavery;

Whereas a dedicated group of like-minded reformers, the Clapham group, assisted, supported, and encouraged Mr. Wilberforce in his fight against the slave trade;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce fought for 20 years in the House of Commons to pass legislation banning the slave trade;

Whereas on February 23, 1807, Britain passed a bill banning the slave trade;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce helped inspire and encourage those who fought against slavery in the United States, including political leaders like John Quincy Adams, spreading a message of hope and freedom throughout America and the promise of the future;

Whereas Mr. Wilberforce labored 46 years to abolish the institution of slavery in the British Empire, ceaselessly defending those without a voice within society;

Whereas in 1833, Mr. Wilberforce was informed on his death bed that the House of Commons had voted to abolish slavery;

Whereas in 2006, the United States Department of State estimated that between 600,000 and 800,000 men, women, and children were trafficked across international borders;

Whereas the International Labour Organization estimates that there are more than 12 million people in forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor, and sexual servitude around the world; and

Whereas the people of the United States, particularly the youth of the United States, are called upon to form clubs and groups dedicated to working against the modern slave trade, human trafficking, and the degradation of human dignity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends to the people of the United States the example of William Wilberforce and his commitment to each and every person's human dignity, value, and

freedom in observation of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade;

(2) encourages the people of the United States, particularly the youth of the United States, to—

(A) observe the anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade;

(B) reflect on Mr. Wilberforce's selfless dedication to the fight against slavery and his commitment to the neediest in society;

(C) commit themselves to recognize the value of every person and to work actively against slavery in all its forms;

(D) work to educate themselves and others to recognize that individuals who are subject to slavery and human trafficking are victims of those who traffick such individuals; and

(E) form high school clubs and groups working against modern day slavery and the trafficking of persons; and

(3) condemns to the highest degree all forms of human trafficking and slavery which are an assault on

human dignity and of which Mr. Wilberforce would
steadfastly resist.

Attest:

Clerk.